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GLANCES AT NEW BOOKS.

Tales and Novels by Maria Edgeworth. Vol. III. London: Baldwin and Co. 1832.

The present volume contains, 'Angelina, or L'Ami Inconnue;' 'The Good French Governess;' 'Mademoiselle Panache,' and 'The Knapsack.' We are glad to renew our acquaintance with all of them, for good sense, accompanied by a lively manner and an obvious desire to accomplish some useful purpose, characterise all Miss Edgeworth's writings, and therefore they are secure of being lasting favorites. The Moral Tales are comprised in this and the preceding volumes. The illustrations continue to possess the same spirit in both departments; and altogether this republication is one of the most tasteful now before the public. To our fancy it is even the favorite of them all.

Life and Works of Lord Byron. Vol. VII. London: Murray, 1832.

The Life and Letters of the Poet are comprised in the first six volumes. The present volume is the commencement of the poems, which it is intended to give in chronological order. There are a great many of Lord Byron's juvenile poems now first published, not distinguished by great excellence, yet of sufficient merit to warrant their being submitted to the ordeal of public opinion. Editors are sometimes blamed for publishing poems which come into their hands when about to publish complete editions, and it is observed, that such and such poems had better not have been printed, and that they will detract from the author's fame, &c. We hold all this to be fallacy, for an author's fame is determined by his best productions, and therefore editors do right in not being too fastidious, and in considering publication the safer rule than suppression. When all that an author has done is before the public, selection is sure to be eventually well made: let us then have complete editions first, and trust to time to give us select ones.

The Magazine of the Beau Monde, or Monthly Journal of Fashion for July 1832. London: Payne.

A handsome coloured portrait of Miss Fanny Kemble, as *Julia* in the *Hunchback*, induced us to give a longer glance than usual at this showy monthly visitor. The likeness is good, we should say not flattering, being assimilated a little, we imagine, to the stock portraits, all of a family, which time out of mind show off the dresses, tippets, bonnets, &c. which are the orthodox fashions for the Cynthias of the minute. Having gratified ourselves by looking at Miss Fanny, remembering her decided advance as an actress in Mr Knowles's beautiful play, we may as well report for the information of our female readers, that the Number contains four large plates, in which are displayed finery in all its varieties. As visitors to the theatres we are glad to see the bonnets looking small, and the caps not of so intercepting a quality as some we have lately encountered. We observe that during the month of July, the fashionable attitudes are to be relieved, sometimes by a handkerchief being carelessly held in the right-hand, while the left plays with the bonnet strings, sometimes by holding an open *billet-doux*, a fan, or any other trifle. The looks are more pensive than we can recommend for the month of July; however, a few smiles are allowed to accompany the evening dresses.

Epistolary Remonstrance to Thomas Morton, Esq. Dramatic Writer and Professed Critic and Reader to Captain Polhill, and His Majesty's Servants of Drury Lane Theatre. London. Wilson, Royal Exchange.

[Concluded.]

The author in the course of his letter touches upon all the prominent abuses of the existing system; points out their effects on authors, on the public, and on the proprietors of the privileged theatres themselves. On each of these points, and also upon the remedies, it was our intention to have entered more at large than we find we can do at present; but as the subject is now in course of investigation before a Committee of the House of Commons with a view to its better settlement, we shall not be at a loss for a suitable opportunity.

The star-system naturally comes under the writer's notice. The following extract contains much that is true; with regard, however, to the Minors, it should be borne in mind that under better circumstances for all, improvement in their particular management may be reasonably expected. Their ambition will be directed higher:—

'But the weakness and cupidity of the Patentees, in which originates this theatrical tyranny, is visited with its own punishment; for subjected to the influence of these *evil stars*, they are constrained to truckle to caprice, and flatter presumption; while, their treasury exhausted to gorge the insatiate pecuniary appetency of their 'Green Room' grandees, they totter to a fall, and appeal in vain for subscription and support, to that very public, sacrificed to their perverse system, whose stage they have degraded, and whose taste they have estranged.

'But yet, if all this disorder and impropriety be maintained to the prejudice of the public in general; it still militates more cruelly against the literati in particular, for the players thus conspiring with each other, to render the stage a terrestrial paradise to themselves, doom the writers to perdition, or admit their own elect, merely to a kind of limbo in the outskirts of their privy dominion. A tolerable actor may dictate—the best author must only sue.

'The unfortunate writers of this vast capital, as I have already observed, who have the hardihood to compose Dramatic Works, are constrained to carry them to the only two Patent Markets, thus necessarily glutted and overstocked; where absolute, irresponsible masters of their fate, you suffer them to accumulate pantomime upon tragedy, melo-drama upon comedy, farce upon opera, and interlude upon spectacle, till, sick and satiated with the prodigious task, you are unable or unwilling to select from the increasing mountain of manuscripts, and therefore cut a short road out of the dilemma, by a partial predetermined choice of such works as are dropped in the private and particular channel, and sweep the remaining superabundant mass clean out of your study, with a gene-

ral circular, unaccompanied by a single proof that you have perused them at all. In fact, having no room for them, the task were profitless sacrifice of time, in a forlorn cause.

"The confusion and death of all this superflux literature which flows in perpetual confluence to the two theatres is—you have told me—' a necessary and irremediable consequence, with a stage consigned to the free controul of private directors, who have a right to make their own particular benefit the rule of their management, and turn the stage to any account which best promises to improve their capital; and is not, therefore, an evil peculiar to the patent; as each of the Minors already pursue, as far as they may, the worst example of the Majors; and would to-morrow, if emancipated, vie with each other in gawdy mummery, and strive to attract the people by any pandering to impurity and ignorance; an inclination, if permitted, which would only perpetuate the same abuses so prejudicial to the dramatic writer; and that the tyranny of ' Drury ' would thus only be multiplied in other hands, on a smaller scale.

'And this I grant you.'

The folly of subjecting matters of taste to the decision of whoever may happen to be the inheritor of a patent must be obvious, we should think, to everybody: our author illustrates the absurdity in this manner:—

'Where would have been the art of painting—even languishing as it is with us, alas!—if some Monarch in times gone by had granted an exclusive patent right to some person, his heirs and assigns, to open one only picture gallery for all London? We should then have seen the privilege in the successive hands of barbers, tailors, auctioneers, and horse-dealers, subjecting the works of accomplished painters to the judgment of some Solomon broker in daubery, engaged as a salaried connoisseur, to damn or save the works of fellow artists; and as the price of admission would have been the chief object of the undertaking—wax-works, raree-shows, and the magic lantern, might have been added to this exhibition of painting, as legitimate inclusions in the privilege. What would have become of our Popes, Addisons, Thomsons, Grays, Byrons, Scotts, Moores, and the rest, had Charles found it expedient to confine poetic publication to two privileged persons, ' their heirs and assigns,' [whether or not Englishmen in birth, or booksellers in trade; to be guided in opinion by some Grub street poetaster?'

THE REFORMER'S SONG.

Hurrah! for the days of corruption are past,
And never, oh never, will come back again;
No longer can despots with tyranny blast
The hopes of a nation—a nation of *men!*

And where are they now, the vain impotent mites,
Who fain would withhold—despite battle and flame,
The voice of the millions! those laws and those rights
Long hoped for, and sought since the conqueror came?

False traitors avaunt! when on history's page
In ages to come the freed Briton shall pore,
By your deeds done in darkness, in bloodshed, and rage,
Shall he curse you who ruled o'er his fathers before.

When those who have fought in fair liberty's cause
Shall be laid in their sepulchres, mould'ring and low,
With a smile and a tear he will think of the laws
Bequeath'd him by patriots who dared strike the blow.

The names of great Cromwell, of Brougham, of Grey,
In the heart of the Briton long cherish'd will be,
Till earth, air, and ocean shall vanish away,
And darkness be spread o'er the land of the free!

R. S. T.

SIGHT-SEEING IN LONDON—SPLENDOUR OF LONDON SHOPS—EXHIBITIONS—PRESENTATION AT COURT—FATIGUE OF ATTENDANCE THERE.

LETTER XXXI OF MARGARET.

London, —— street.

Dear Emily,—Lady Susan has returned from her Easter excursion, and threatens again to involve me in dissipation and sight-seeing. You can have no notion, my dear Emily, of the variety of ingenious methods practised in this town to beguile the thoughtless citizens of their superfluous cash, who, though they generally keep a wary eye on their pockets, both from fear of light-fingered marauders and nature's fallibility when temptation offers, think they cannot risk much, when the price of admission is but one shilling, that at all events, where the outlay is so small, they must have their money's worth, even if they realise no interest. As you walk along the streets of London, placards, with letters three inches in size, attract your eye, handbills and cards are insinuated to your finger-tips, and the most cajoling set of boys and men woo you to inspect some matchless assemblage of nature and art. The rage among shopkeepers for outdoing each other in selling bargains is really amusing; to read their advertisements, you would think the entire process of weaving, handicraft, and mechanics, were performed by fairies, and not the hard toil of human beings, who might be supposed to gain a just remuneration for their labour. No people, I should think, in the world, excel the English in the art of exhibiting their goods to advantage; nothing I ever saw in Paris could at all equal it; the shop windows are really elegant, from the mode in which the various articles are displayed and contrasted; cleanliness and order form the first attraction; some of the glasses are so clear, that you doubt an intervening medium, and are astonished at the tradesman's want of caution. Jewellers' shops, with their heaps of gold and silver, and precious stones, recall the descriptions of the Arabian tales, whilst the gaudy folds of silk and shawls remind you of the emirs' daughters' walks among the bezesteins of the east. Print and book shops beguile many a luckless wight of the remaining guinea which he thought to bestow upon renovated apparel, or ' creature comforts;' plaster cast shops are liable to the same objection. Artificial florists keep up an eternal summer; even shops of the most ordinary commodities are rendered piquant; and medicine is robbed of half its horrors, by the brilliant colours of chemists' vases, and by their dainty labels and wrappers. In truth, on a brilliant spring morning, with the sun shining, and a cheerful companion, nothing can be pleasanter than a walk in the principal streets of London. The broad and clear pavé on which you walk with ease and grace, the groups of pretty women, the splendid equipages, and endless succession of brilliant shops, keep your attention ever animated and interested.

When tired of walking, a seat presents itself at every exhibition, among which the numerous collections of ancient and modern paintings, by Foreign and British artists, are deservedly the most frequented. The British Museum contains, also, the immortal remains of ancient Greece, happily rescued by Lord Elgin from the hands of barbarians, to form a school of rising artists in England, who, with increase of knowledge, hang enthusiastically over these treasures of grace and beauty, which may be equalled, but can never be surpassed. Apropos, in this Museum there is one deficiency, not a single seat, to allow one to contemplate in luxurious repose those models

THEATRICALS.

English Opera at the Olympic.

As we go to press early, we can advert but briefly to the opening last night of this tasteful little theatre. We could wish that it was better adapted for the specific purpose of opera; but as the company includes good actors as well as singers, we hope the public will patronise their own enjoyment sufficiently to make the season successful. With Miss Kelly, Miss Harriet Cawse, Reeve, O. Smith, and Wrench, fastidious must they be who can lack amusement: and there are other names of merit to be added. Of Miss Henderson, who succeeds Miss Poole, we shall speak more another time. Her voice is weak; but her acting struck us as sprightly and intelligent.

The house was tolerably well filled; the lower tier of boxes looking gay and fashionable.

New Strand.

Mr Jerrold goes on and prospers. The *Golden Calf*, produced on Saturday at this theatre, sustains and more the promise of the *Rent Day*. The worship which it is the object of this play to denounce and help to extinguish, is the curse and disgrace of England. It is the canker-worm which eats away all good feelings, deadens the perception of merit, except when prosperous, stifles the heart's best impulses, creates a false and pernicious love where indifference and even dislike would else prevail, leads its votaries into ruinous hypocrisies of various descriptions, inclining them to appear rich when they are not, making them spend money when they cannot afford it, corrupting the habits, and through them the understanding, until at last the countenance and good word of a fool or a knave are valued more than the approbation of the good and wise. Oh it is a foul blight on all that is excellent, a very car of Juggernaut, crushing under its wheels the infatuated beings who swell its triumphs. But having vented some of our spleen, let us proceed to our more immediate object,—the plot of the new comedy.

Mountney (Abbott), the son of a merchant lately deceased, and who had acquired a handsome fortune by industry, resides in a style of splendour in Berkeley square, where, by pursuing a round of pleasures—balls, routs, gaming, and the usual etceteras, he and his wife find themselves at the commencement of the play on the brink of irretrievable ruin. Amidst all this dissipation they have retained enough of good feeling and principle to be distinguished advantageously above the herd of their usual visitors, of whom the principal are *Lord Tares* (Rede), a dissipated man of fashion, *Echo* (Forrester), his toad-eating companion, *Magnet* (Selby), striving under the disadvantages of a humble origin, to get a commission in the Guards, and *Mr Smith* (Doyne), a baronet *de jure*, as he supposes,—but needing litigation-money, to become such *de facto*: these are the sort of persons who surround *Mountney*, and who, 'after their kinds,' waste his substance. A money lender is an indispensable concomitant in such a state of things, and accordingly we have *Pinchbeck* (Perry) playing a principal part in *Mountney's* affairs. He has just been the agent for the latter in the sale of his country estate, of which the purchaser is a *Mr Chrystal* (Williams), a supposed rich Nabob, who on the strength of his reputed wealth is also an object of attraction to the aforesaid flutterers. *Chrystal* discerns the characters of the whole, and designs the rescue of *Mountney* and the exposure of the rest. *Lord Tares*, *Echo*, *Smith* and *Magnet*, all for their respective purposes, are in want of a loan from him, and with that view accept an invitation from him to dinner, at his lodging in a second floor in Theobald's road. There, additionally to humble them in the eyes of *Mountney*, who also, however, partakes the humiliation, they are severally induced, on the plea of his servants' absence, to assist him in preparing dinner, which is to consist of the wholesome and unfashionable one of mutton-chops. To *Mountney* is assigned the task of blowing the fire—the gridiron is placed in the hands of *Lord Tares*; *Echo* is requested to place the knives, *Magnet* to chop the wood, and *Smith*, the expectant Baronet, to hold the chops. At this juncture a letter is brought in to *Chrystal*, who, after reading it, informs his guests that he is under the necessity of deferring the loans. This announcement acts instantaneously; they all abruptly leave the room, except *Mountney*, to whom *Chrystal* makes profession of friendship, hints at the characters of the friends, and promises to send him a packet containing the means of retrievement from his difficulties; this packet he charges him to open in the presence of them all. They are to meet, with some fifty more, at a party about to be given by *Mountney*; a party looked forward to by more than him with no ordinary interest. And here are the causes. *Mrs Mountney* (Mrs Waylett), unknown to her husband, has borrowed sums of money of *Pinchbeck*, depositing with him her diamonds, which she knows that her husband will expect her to wear: hence her solicitude. She despatches *Clara* (Miss Dix) to *Pinchbeck's*, to borrow the diamonds for that single night; he is from home, and she is constrained to unfold her message to *Mrs Pinchbeck* (Mrs Garrick), who alleges that she can do nothing in *Pinchbeck's* absence, and that he will not be home in time. Now *Mountney*, in order to keep up appearances with *Pinchbeck*, has invited him to the party, and what is worse, *Mrs Pinchbeck*, between whom and *Mrs Mountney* the most 'cordial' hatred subsists. The party then will be the scene of triumph to the usurer's wife, and of mortification to her hostess: hence the eager anticipations of the former. Night arrives; *Mrs Mountney* appears without her diamonds, *Mountney* entreats her to put them on,—of course in vain. Presently enters *Pinchbeck*,—then his wife, decked in the fatal diamonds. *Mrs Mountney's* alarm is extreme, but her husband does not detect them. At this moment the house is beset by importunate creditors, some of whom even force themselves into the room, and before all the company reiterate their demands. *Mountney* is in the utmost consternation, but is relieved by the arrival of the expected packet: he eagerly opens it, when to his utter dismay, out falls an apron, a day book, and a ledger. There is also a letter from *Chrystal* in explanation;

but the whole appears to *Mountney* an insult, and his case hopeless. This is the termination of the second act. At the commencement of the third act, *Mountney*, having just lost his all at a gaming table, appears in utter despair, and with the gamester's remedy,—a pistol. His wife enters; he tells her all, and implores her instantly to fetch him her diamonds, which as a last stake he had imperilled and lost at play. To save him from the destruction he threatens if she do not instantly comply, she promises to bring them to him, but leaves the room, unknowing what to do. While all this has been passing, *Lord Tares* is arrested and conveyed to a sponging-house. His Lordship, it must now be told, ranks higher in villany than his associates. He all along has been planning the seduction of *Mountney's* wife; to that end he has already lent her a thousand pounds, and has now, in furtherance of his views, dispatched *Echo* to her with a letter, inviting her to call on him. The letter did not reach *Mrs Mountney*, but in the dreadful emergency in which she found herself and had left her husband, she saw no alternative but trying the dangerous expedient of an application to the gilded profligate. She accordingly presents herself before him (he thinks in consequence of the letter); she represents to him the urgency of the case, and just as he has unfolded his intentions, which she has scorned, *Mountney* himself arrives; on which she retires into an adjoining room. *Echo* soon follows, and delivers a letter to *Mountney*; it is that addressed to his wife by *Lord Tares*. In his rage he insists on an immediate encounter with his Lordship, to whom he presents a pistol. This is overheard by *Mrs Mountney*, who rushes out to avert the consequences. A fresh horror comes over *Mountney*,—the impression of his wife's guilt. He however listens to her explanation, and the consciousness of transgressions on both sides leads to mutual forgiveness. The clouds now di-appear. *Mountney's* steward (Andrews) comes to tell him that his creditors will give him time, and *Chrystal*, who now again appears, completes the opening happiness, by announcing that the dice through which *Mountney* lost his property had proved to be loaded; he explains that the great interest he has taken in *Mountney's* affairs originates in services rendered to him by *Mountney's* father, and further undertakes to avert all impending ills from *Mountney*, premising, however, that it will be necessary that the latter shall no longer turn his back on the industrious pursuits which distinguished his late father.

Diffuse as our account has been, we must not omit to state that there is a pleasant under-plot, in which *Rags* (Keeley) has the principal share. *Rags* is the unwilling servant of the usurer *Pinchbeck*, to whose service he is bound by a debt of 20*l.* which the latter has let him incur the more effectually to secure him. His condition early excites the commiseration of *Chrystal*, who at length emancipates him, not however, before he has endured the prospective horrors of a writ, bailiffs, and the other ills which debtors' flesh is heir to.

Owing to the length to which this article has extended, we shall reserve further remarks on the merits of this piece for another number, and on the same account we must speak only generally of the acting. Abbott made his first appearance here, and we think with manifest advantage to the strength of the company. We remember that in the *Robber's Wife*, and in some few other pieces of a tragic cast, this actor played with a force and discrimination for which his general efforts in tragedy have never gained him credit. The acting of *Mountney* satisfies us that an injudicious casting of parts often exposes actors to censure, which they would escape if left to their own judgment,—albeit that neither is not always to be trusted. Keeley's part fits him like his clothes—tight, grotesque, and peculiar. Tied to a situation which he dislikes, his own consolations rise and fall in an inverse ratio to the discomforts of the usurer, and he pleasantly calculates the steps between vexation and hanging, which particular events might bring upon his master. The latter consummation is however a felicity in anticipation to himself, too extatic to be long dwelt on. *Mr Pinchbeck* keeps but an indifferent larder, the mice therefore are regarded by *Rags* as very unnecessary rivals, and as he lies a-bed at night, listening to their prancings about the cupboard, he snatches a passing joy in thinking of their disappointment. His description of a writ was in itself sufficient to produce a run, and his turning round at the mention of 'Chancery Lane' might be cited as a fine illustration of instinct.

Mrs Waylett, in a part different from those she usually plays, surprised us by the general spirit of her acting. The scene at the sponging-house was altogether impressive. Williams as *Chrystal* reminded us of Dowton very agreeably. Rede's part is not a prepossessing one; but he played it with judgment, avoiding the excess which makes such parts offensive. The other characters we must dismiss with general praise; all seemed to exert themselves and to succeed. We might blame a few things here and there, just to shew our discrimination, but we believe that sometimes that quality is better shewn by giving unqualified praise to performers when they betray no other defects than those inseparable from their best exertions.

Is not the plot of the piece founded on something in 'Cecilia,' or one of Madame D'Arblay's novels?

Chivalry of Count Raymundo.—There was an emperor of Germany who married a daughter of the king of Bohemia. And by some principal courtiers she was accused of being in love with a certain noble page. And the emperor shut her up in an apartment like a prison, saying that if in a year and a day no knight came forward to do battle in her behalf, she should be burnt to death in sight of the whole people. And never could the afflicted empress find any one to do battle for her, so great was the power of her accusers. One of her servants pitied her so much, that he came all the way to Barcelona, and related the affair to the count. And hearing that there was no one in Germany who would fight for so noble a lady, he resolved to go in person and do her need. And the champion of the accusers was a gentleman of Provence. So the count reached the emperor's court only three days before the battle; and he obtained permission to see the empress, and she proved her innocence to him. So when the day arrived, a great fire was made, and a great company gathered together; and the count prepared himself for the battle, and the champion fled, and the count engaged to fight the two chief accusers one after the other. And when he had killed one, the other feared to come forth, and owned himself vanquished; and the false testimony was confessed, and the queen declared innocent. And the count, after his victory, immediately stole from Germany, as if to avoid the praises and rewards. And the empress followed him with a noble heart and brought him back; and right nobly may be said of the emperor, who gave him the marquisate of Provence.—*Lardner's Cyclopædia.—History of Spain and Portugal, Vol. III.*

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